

REMINGTON SERVICE DISTRICT

Background

The Town of Remington anchors the Remington Service District. One of Fauquier County's three incorporated towns, Remington, formerly known as Rappahannock Station, Bowensville and Millview, has had a varied history. This Town has witnessed:

- Numerous military engagements and Union occupation during the Civil War;
- Prosperity during the 1870 – 1890 period of Reconstruction;
- A strong Temperance Movement to eliminate bars and pool halls in the late 1800's;
- Periodic downtown floods and a major fire in 1925; and
- A gradual ebbing of economic vitality between 1940 and 1990 with the decline of rail travel and the construction of the US Route 15/29 By-Pass.

The result is that Remington is a place rich in historical resources, and a very livable community for all age and income groups. The Town provides a remarkable level of independent living for senior citizens, whose walks to Church, the Post Office and stores form the foundation of a long and healthy life. In recent years, the Town has attracted a group of new residents as proud and aware of Remington's special qualities as that older generation. The Town wishes to work with the County in continuing and expanding such quality of life by duplicating this livable pattern in the surrounding Service District.

1. Existing Characteristics

a. Planning History

Fauquier County's first Comprehensive Plan of 1967 called for the creation of a vast suburban community that would extend from the Rappahannock River east to beyond Midland. This growth never took place, and the 1987 and 1994 Plan revisions radically scaled down the original Plan, but like the first, never engaged the local community in the planning process. In the last ten years the Service District grew by 220 single family dwellings, mainly in two developments, Lee's Glen, to the north, and The Meadows, to the east of the Town, on Lucky Hill Road.

b. Planned Growth Patterns

The original 1967 plan conceived the Remington area as a spread out, automobile dependent suburb. The 1987 and 1994 Plans accepted this pattern of growth uncritically. The Remington community and Town Council wish to provide an alternative to the suburban model of past planning efforts, and return to more traditional development forms and street design, as such is consistent with that of the historic Town.

c. Community Facilities and Shops

Remington is home to many community facilities, such as the Remington Baptist, Remington United Methodist and Saint Luke's Episcopal Churches, Margaret M. Pierce Elementary School, Fire Company 2, Town Hall, Police Station and the United States Post Office.

Remington's downtown commercial uses suffered a financial reversal with the construction of the US Route 15/29 By-Pass, but the downtown has stabilized, and is presently engaged in a Main Street revival program. Given this history, the Town is determined to phase and pace the creation of additional commercial development so that existing uses will not be adversely affected.

d. Transportation

The construction of the US Route 15/29 By-pass, while a severe commercial setback at the time, has spared the Town's fabric from the devastation associated with major arterial road "improvements". Moreover, the railroad, which caused the Town's founding, may one day provide the community with commuter passenger service. Remington itself is a textbook example of classic urbanism, with a fine grid of interconnecting streets.

e. Utilities

Remington manages its own municipal water system. By agreement with the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA), the Town provides water to developments to the north and west of the Railroad line. The town draws 104,000 gallons of water per day from one of four wells and has standpipe capacity for 397,000 gallons. Water in the balance of the Service District is provided by the WSA.

Remington once owned and operated a municipal sewer system. However, the Town sold both this system and its license to discharge treated effluent into the Rappahannock River to the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA). The WSA plant currently has a treatment capacity of 1.4 million gallons per day, with a planned capacity of 2.0 million gallons per day. The plant serves the Bealeton, Opal and Remington Service Districts. (See Utility Element)

The former Orange & Alexandria – now Southern – Railroad line, which "made" Remington, and attracted so much military attention during the Civil War, crosses the service district in a generally east-west direction. In the longer term, a Commonwealth corporation, Virginia Rail Express intends to extend commuter rail service along this line, ultimately to the neighboring Culpeper County.

The Service District is also crossed by a variety of nationally significant electric and gas transmission line easements. The proximity of these lines has resulted in the location of electrical peaking facilities for Dominion Power and the Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC). Both sites are located off Lucky Hill Road on adjoining properties (refer to the Land Use Plan for their designated locations). Once the ODEC facility becomes operational, ODEC will provide \$1.5 million to Fauquier County for the purchase of development rights on local farmland within a 5-mile radius. That open space investment will only benefit this Service District's efforts in parkland and open space development and conservation efforts.

While technically not a utility, a major crushed stone-quarry defines the eastern boundary of the Service District. This quarry is located just north of the two peaking facilities.

f. Natural Resources

The Remington Service District shares the same landscape of a former lakebed as Bealeton, Opal and Midland. The Service District is bounded and crossed by two unruly watercourses, the Rappahannock River and Tinpot Run, which conspire to periodically inundate a part of Remington's downtown. A recent Federal Emergency Management Agency study indicates that Tinpot Run has a 1% chance in any year of a flood with floodwaters reaching 12 feet above the stream invert level. (FIRM, # 510056 0001 B)

Local soils, Albano, Ashburn, Dulles, Panorama and Penn, laid down when the area was a vast shallow lake in pre-historic times, have very poor perk potential – and were the primary reason why the 1967 septic drain-field based plan was unrealizable. These soils are also very water retentive, and contribute to Remington's flooding difficulties.

g. Historic Resources

The decline in Remington's economic vitality in the later 20th century paradoxically preserved much of the Town's historic resources. With assistance of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, the County completed a Historic Resources Update in 2001. Study findings concluded that, in addition to the earthworks and battle areas associated with the Civil War, the quantity and quality of 75 structures within the Town would merit the placing of the Town on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Examples of structures which command this attention include:

- St. Luke's Episcopal Church (1881);
- Remington Baptist Church (1884);
- Farmer's Co-Op Building (1903);
- Old Post Office (1918);
- Groves Hardware Building (1905); and
- Numerous Victorian/Queen Anne, "I" and "L"-plan houses on Main, Church, Washington and Franklin Streets.



This Plan recommends that the County and the Town fund and complete that final survey requisite for placement on the State and National Registers. Inclusion of a building on

the State and National Registers does not affect how or what an owner may do with the structure. However, certain types of maintenance and improvements may qualify an owner for Federal and Commonwealth tax abatements. Inclusion of the Town on the National Register would also result in special consideration and qualification in the allocation of Federal program funds – such as TEA-21 biking, and hiking routes, the restoration of public facilities, recreation funding and flood abatement projects. The Historic Area map identifies a concentration of these structures. This map represents only a preliminary survey of the Town. A second map would be proposed to the Commonwealth Department of Historic Resources and the National Park Service once all structures within the Town were thoroughly surveyed. (See Figure RE-1).

Remington Service District Vision Statement

VISION STATEMENT:

- a. The Service District will be a “people friendly” place modeled on the historic Town of Remington, which will act as the commercial and institutional hub of the new neighborhoods constructed to the north and east of the Town.
- b. The Town will be surrounded by an extensive park system, formed in great part by the floodplains of Tinpot Run and the Rappahannock River. This park system will extend northwards and to the east to link with a major wildlife and natural area bounded by Lucky Hill Road. Remington’s parks will provide substantial support for a year round program of recreational events, attractive to visitors and locals alike. Additionally, a variety of small “vest pocket” and neighborhood parks will be distributed throughout the residential neighborhoods to provide quiet places for neighbors to meet and socialize.
- c. Housing in Remington will range in size, type and price from apartments over shops, to apartments for the elderly located near to shopping; to single family detached housing on a wide variety of lot sizes.
- d. Existing Business US Route 15/29, Lucky Hill Road and a new road extending from the Town to Lucky Hill Road will be the major collector roads of the community. Movement throughout the community will be equally convenient for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- a. Remington, with an inventory of over 75 buildings worthy of inclusion on State and National Registers, has a unique opportunity to develop and market itself as a historic, small railroad town, which should make the Service District very attractive for tourism and future residents seeking such a valued environment.
- b. Remington is endowed with a full compliment of community facilities, and thus can provide new neighborhoods with community services that usually lag housing developments by 10 or 20 years.
- c. Remington has a river and creek, whose floodplains can be the foundation of a unique open space network for wildlife and parks.

AREAS NEEDING SPECIAL FOCUS:

- a. The core of Remington is threatened by flooding, and this has contributed to a lack of business investment.
- b. The community has begun to address, and needs to continue working on the environmental and developmental constraints that have been impediments to community's prosperity.
- c. The community has attracted entry-level housing and less-preferred industrial uses, such as plastic factories, multiple electric peaking plants and petroleum storage tanks.

STRENGTHS:

- a. Remington is a very people friendly community of caring neighbors – as great a place to grow up as to grow “young” in heart.
- b. Remington is a distinct community, a real place with a unique history and character.
- c. With an Incorporated Town at the core, the Remington Service District possesses the positive potential to oversee development as a joint endeavor of County and Town.

3. Land Use Plan

- a. Overall Layout

The Plan proposes that the Town of Remington be the institutional and commercial hub of the Service District. To this end, existing Business US Route 15/29, Lucky Hill Road and a new collector linking these two would fan out from the Town to become the major collector roads of the Service District. The Plan also proposes a major study and re-engineering of the floodplains surrounding the Town. The study would seek to identify the essential steps needed to resolve the constant flooding threat, and establish the Rappahannock River and Tinpote Run floodplain as the foundation of a major park and wildlife system within the Service District. (See Figure RE-2).

- b. Commercial/Office Uses

As noted previously, the existing Town of Remington shall be the focus of commercial and office uses in the early phases of the Plan. An additional tract, located to the north and east of the Town could ultimately be designated for such uses, only if-and-when this land were boundary adjusted into the Town. (This requirement is dictated by the need to insure that development of the additional commercial and office land shall be paced to preserve the vitality of existing downtown.)

- c. Schools

In addition to the existing Margaret M. Pierce Elementary School, two new school sites are proposed within the Service District, one on Lucky Hill Road and one on Business US Route 15/29.

d. Parks

The crescent of Tinpot Run's parkland surrounding the town will be linked to the two school sites and with the wildlife and natural preserve by linear open spaces, furnished with pedestrian paths and bikeways. A careful design and distribution of neighborhood and "vest pocket" parks will be included in new neighborhoods as these are developed.

The Old Dominion Electric Cooperative's peaking facility site provides wetland and natural habitat areas, which the utility has offered to cooperatively develop for passive recreation and environmental education. That opportunity needs to be pursued by both the County and the Town of Remington.

e. Boundary Adjustment

The land use map identifies an adjusted jurisdictional boundary for Remington that includes the Tinpot Run floodplain and a future Commercial – Mixed Use area to the north of Remington. The County anticipates that future funding of Tinpot Run's re-engineering will be assisted if this stream area is within the Town Boundary, while the reason for including the Commercial – Mixed Use area is provided in 3. b. above. Other boundary adjustments will occur if agreed by Town and County.

f. Residential

Development density within the residential neighborhoods of the Service District will continue the existing pattern of 1–3 dwellings per gross acre. While developing subdivisions, such as Lee's Glen and The Meadows may be completed as originally conceived, new development within the District should be designed according to the historic principles noted in General Design Principles.

4. Remington Land Uses

**TABLE RE-1
REMINGTON SERVICE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT ACREAGE**

Land Use Category	Developed acres	Undeveloped acres	Total acres
Commercial		26	26
Mixed Use		44	44
Industrial	30	93	123
Residential High	15	8	23
Residential Medium	11	31	42
Residential Low	186	942	1128
Total	242	1144	1386

5. Routes 17 - 28 By-pass

- a. Traffic projections on Routes 17 and 28 led the Virginia Department of Transportation to propose a grade-separated interchange at the intersection of Routes 17 and 28, which would have devastating impacts on the planned Bealeton Town Center. This Plan

proposes redirecting through traffic on Route 17 to Route 15/29, by using the State's interchange funding for the construction of a limited access By-Pass that would link Route 17 with US Route 15/29 on an alignment, generally south of the Craig Run. The proposed limited access roadway (110 foot right-of-way) would terminate in the vicinity of the Routes 28 and 15/29 intersection. Such limited access By-Pass shall have no intermediate entrances or exits between Routes 17 and 15/29 – to avoid threatening the commercial viability of the Bealeton Town Center or the Town of Remington.

- b. Significant engineering, environmental studies and design will be needed to determine actual alignment and construction. The County and the Town of Remington will conclude a mutually-binding agreement stating that all questions of road alignment, design, and function must be mutually agreeable before construction of this freeway is undertaken, and thereafter.

6. Linear Parks and Bikeways

The Town of Remington and the Remington Service District will form the heartland of a linear park and bikeway network. Figure RE-3 illustrates the wide-ranging scope of this network. Of the four routes identified, one has specific historic significance associated with the Civil War. Another route represents a real physical challenge due to topography, albeit rewarded with spectacular mountain views. The last two routes provide contrasting scenery – pastoral meadows and foothills, versus agrarian flatlands punctuated by county crossroad communities.

The County and Town will work with the Virginia Department of Transportation and with Culpeper County to fund physical improvements to roads and paths along this network in the interest of safety and enjoyment of these routes.

7. Joint County and Town Oversight Agreement

The Commonwealth of Virginia permits incorporated towns and counties to enter into joint oversight relationships regarding development of lands surrounding towns. The historical grounds for these arrangements were to ensure that ultimately annexed development would be designed and constructed in an appropriate manner – e.g. so that roads lined up correctly and were constructed with curb geometry and materials consistent with the town code, regulations and design standards. However, the Remington-Fauquier agreement would not predicate some future annexation, but rather seek to create a seamless coordination between the historic Town fabric and that of the Service District.

The Joint County and Town Oversight Agreement would cover substantive questions of land use and subdivision as well as procedural issues of review, coordination and approval actions.

a. Land Use

The Town of Remington is not comfortable with many of the uses currently allowed in some of the County Zoning Districts, especially the non-residential, industrial districts. This position is very understandable, since these districts contain elements appropriate in an early 20th century industrial America. The Zoning Districts need to be updated and refined further to be compatible in areas adjacent to the incorporated town and the Service Districts.

b. Subdivision

The Town of Remington was designed in the 19th century according to classical town planning norms. These norms were discarded after World War II and replaced with a different, auto-dependent suburban model, which is proving to be functionally problematic. The Remington community would prefer that subdivision of the Service District follow the norms of the older tradition. (The villages of Catlett, Calverton and Midland join Remington, in preferring that growth follow the classical town planning models of their founding.) Accordingly, the Town and County will need to develop a refined Subdivision Ordinance, which accommodates their shared interests for the Service District. These added elements to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances would encourage the creation of generally narrow and deep lots, a network of short and narrow streets that terminate at other streets, and a plurality of vest-pocket neighborhood parks.

c. Procedure

While the County will necessarily continue to have ultimate authority over the Service District, the two jurisdictions must develop a formal referral procedure. This procedure could include the following protocols:

1. The Town designation of a non-voting member on any County Planning Commission or Board handling a planning question within the Remington Service District. This non-voting member would take part in formal questioning of applicants during hearings and participate in deliberative working sessions, thereby assisting the County in understanding the Town's goals and concerns.
2. A mandatory pre-submission meeting with Remington. The County would enforce a policy that any rezoning, special exception or subdivision application would contain a letter from the Town referencing this meeting and the Town's position on the proposal presented.
3. County planning and engineering staff would consult with the Town during the review process, and include the Town's final recommendation in Staff Reports to the County Planning Commission and Board.

d. Funding

The County's development review fee schedule would be revised to include Remington's costs in this joint review effort.